Assessment for Learning:

10 principles

Research-based principles to guide classroom practice

2002

Assessment should take account of the importance of **learner motivation Assessment for learning** Assessment that encourages should be sensitive and constructive because any assessment has an emotional impact **Assessment for** learning fosters motivation by learning should emphasising progress and achievement rather than failure. learning goals and a shared understanding of the criteria by which they are assessed Comparison with others who have been more successful is Teachers should be aware of unlikely to motivate learners. It the impact that comments. Assessment for learning should can also lead to their marks and grades can have be regarded as a key professional skill for teachers For effective learning to take place withdrawing from the on learners' confidence and learners need to understand what it is learning process in areas enthusiasm and should be they are trying to achieve - and want Teachers require the professional where they have been as constructive as possible to achieve it. Understanding and for learning knowledge and skills to: plan for made to feel they are 'no in the feedback that they commitment follows when learners should be recognised assessment; observe learning; good'. Motivation can be as central to classroom practice give. Comments that have some part in deciding goals analyse and interpret evidence preserved and enhanced **Learners should receive** focus on the work rather and identifying criteria for of learning; give feedback to by assessment methods than the person are constructive guidance about assessing progress. learners and support learners which protect the more constructive for Much of what teachers and learners do in Communicating assessment in self-assessment. Teachers learner's autonomy, both learning and classrooms can be described as assessment. criteria involves discussing Learners need information and guidance in should be supported in provide some choice motivation. That is, tasks and questions prompt learners them with learners using order to plan the next steps in their learning. developing these skills and constructive to demonstrate their knowledge. terms that they can Teachers should: pinpoint the learner's through initial and feedback, and understanding and skills. What learners understand, providing strengths and advise on how to develop continuing professional create opportunity say and do is then observed and examples of how the them; be clear and constructive about development. for self-direction. interpreted, and judgements are criteria can be met in any weaknesses and how they might made about how learning can be practice and engaging be addressed: provide opportunities improved. These assessment Assessment for learning develops learners' capacity for self-assessment so learners in peer- and for learners to improve upon their processes are an essential part self-assessment. work. of everyday classroom practice and involve both teachers fosters that they can become reflective is sensitive and learners in reflection. motivation and dialogue and decision constructive making. Independent learners have the ability to seek out and The process of learning has to be in the minds of both is a key promotes gain new skills, new knowledge and new understandings. learner and teacher when assessment is planned and when understanding professional They are able to engage in self-reflection and to identify the the evidence is interpreted. Learners should become as aware of goals and next steps in their learning. Teachers should equip of the 'how' of their learning as they are of the 'what'. criteria learners with the desire and the capacity to take helps learners charge of their learning through developing the is central to know how to classroom skills of self-assessment. improve practice **Assessment for learning** should be part of effective develops **Assessment for Learning** focuses on how the capacity is the process of seeking and students learn for self-assessment A teacher's planning should provide opportunities for both interpreting evidence for use by learner and teacher to obtain and use information about progress Assessment for learning should recognise the full range of achievements of all learners learners and their teachers to decide towards learning goals. It also has to be flexible to respond to initial and where the learners are in their learning, emerging ideas and skills. Planning should include strategies to ensure that where they need to go and how best to learners understand the goals they are pursuing and the criteria that will be Assessment for learning should be used to enhance all learners' opportunities get there. recognises all applied in assessing their work. How learners will receive feedback, how they to learn in all areas of educational activity. It should enable all learners to is part of effective educational will take part in assessing their learning and how they will be helped to make achieve their best and to have their efforts recognised. planning achievement further progress should also be planned.

Research-based principles of assessment for learning to guide classroom practice

Assessment for Learning

ssessment *for* learning is one of the most important purposes of assessment. It is not the only purpose and is to be distinguished from assessment *of* learning, which is carried out for the purposes of grading and reporting (ARG, 1999). A review of research into classroom assessment (Black and Wiliam, 1998) has shown that assessment for learning is one of the most powerful ways of improving learning and raising standards. Current research is adding further evidence in support of this claim and the empirical evidence is underpinned by theory from the psychology of learning and studies of learning motivation.

While assessment of learning has well established procedures, assessment for learning requires some theoretical ideas to be put into practice if the potential benefits are to be gained. In doing this, it is important to follow certain guiding principles which reflect the essential features of assessment for learning.

The *Principles of assessment for learning* presented here have benefited from comments from a wide variety of individuals and associations, whose help is gratefully acknowledged. This leaflet/poster is a further step towards changing assessment practice to safeguard the necessary quality of learning experiences needed for achieving the goals of education.



The Assessment Reform Group (ARG) has played a key role in bringing the research evidence about assessment for learning to the attention of the education community through the commissioned Black and Wiliam work, *Inside the Black Box*, and the follow-up, *Assessment for Learning: beyond the black box*. In continuing its endeavour to improve practice in assessment it has developed the *Principles of assessment for learning*.

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For further information about the work of the Assessment Reform Group, and to download copies of this leaflet/poster, please see http://www.assessment-reform-group.org.uk